



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/689,831	10/13/2000	Sadao Nishibori	3170/2	6502

7590 11/20/2001

DOUGHERTY & TROXELL
SUITE 1404
5205 LEESBURG PIKE
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22041

[REDACTED] EXAMINER

PRINCE, FRED G

[REDACTED] ART UNIT

[REDACTED] PAPER NUMBER

1724

DATE MAILED: 11/20/2001

2

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/689,831	Applicant(s) NISHIBORI ET AL.
	Examiner Fred G. Prince	Art Unit 1724

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 October 2000.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 1-3,5,9 and 12 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 11,16 and 17 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 4, 6-8, 10, 13-15, and 18-19 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on October 13, 2000 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. Figures 15-17 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g).
2. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they include the following reference sign(s) not mentioned in the description: "72". Correction is required.

Specification

3. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: Throughout the disclosure "roots" are designated as "71" whereas the "roots" are shown as "72" on the drawings.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

4. Claims 4, 6-8, 10-11, 13-15, and 18-19 are objected to because of the following informalities: "any one of claims 1" should be changed to --claim 1--. Appropriate correction is required.
5. Claims 16-17 are objected to because of the following informalities: "any one of claims 10" should be changed to --claim 10--. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

7. Claims 11, 16, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims are rejected for the following reasons:

8. Claim 11 recites the limitation "the synthetic resin woods" in lines 1-2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

9. Regarding claim 16, the phrase "preferably" renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitation(s) following the phrase are part of the claimed invention.

10. Regarding claim 17, the phrase "such as" renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitations following the phrase are part of the claimed invention.

See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

Allowable Subject Matter

11. Claims 1-3, 5, 9, and 12 are allowed.

12. Claims 11, 16, and 17 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Art Unit: 1724

13. Claims 4, 6-8, 10, 13-15, and 18-19 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the objections set forth in this Office action.

14. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: While it is known in the art to provide a base serving ~~as~~ seedling beds for vegetation, wherein the base is immersed in one of the specified bodies of water and is comprised ^{of} ~~or~~ looped filaments of a thermoplastic resin (see US Pat No 5,087,400 to Theuveny), and it is known to provide a low density and relatively high density portion for a cultivating base (see JP 5-95735) with vegetation planted in the relatively high density portion, in the examiner's opinion, the prior art fails to teach or fairly suggest providing a cultivating base further including a low density portion having voids of 80-90% with the vegetation planted in a low density portion.

Conclusion

15. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. References are cited of interest to show the state of the art.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Fred G. Prince whose telephone number is (703) 306-9169. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 6:30-4:00; alt. Fridays 6:30-3:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Simmons can be reached on (703) 308-1972. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)

Application/Control Number: 09/689,831

Page 5

Art Unit: 1724

872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final
communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or
proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-
0661.

Fred Prince
Fred Prince
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 1724
November 14, 2001